

Award-winning environmental toxicologist: US, Israeli use of banned uranium ammunition in Mideast war crime

'One man, one vote; that is coming to Palestine'



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INTERVIEW EXCLUSIVE

It is now over a year since the Gaza Strip has been gripped in an Israeli aggression triggered by the Hamas resistance group's attack on Israel. With over 40,000 people dead and many more injured, the war for Palestinians in Gaza means continuing misery under an Israeli campaign that has demolished much of the territory and driven almost the entire population - 2.3 million - from their homes. Hundreds of thousands are going hungry while living in squalid tent cities as the second winter of the war brings cold rains and flooding.

Amidst this dire situation, the International Criminal Court has issued arrest warrants for Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and his former defense chief Yoav Gallant for war crimes and crimes against humanity in Gaza. Meanwhile, the US, a key supporter of Israel, is set to swear in a new president, Donald Trump, in January. Against this backdrop, Iran Daily spoke with Dr. Mozghan Savabieasfahani, an advocate for justice in Palestine. Based on her research in the region, the award-winning environmental toxicologist shares insights on the use of banned depleted uranium ammunition in the Middle East by the US and Israel and its devastating consequences for the region's children, which constitutes a war crime.

The Assistant Professor of Environmental Sciences at the University of Michigan also expresses her optimism about the end of the Gaza war and the prospects for freedom for the people in the Middle East.

Here is the full interview:

IRAN DAILY: Do you think the US President-elect Donald Trump will break with the policies of his predecessor, Joe Biden, on the Gaza war, given that he campaigned as an anti-war candidate?

SAVABIEASFHANI: Donald Trump showed us his essence the first time he became the president of the United States. He is the guy who said Jerusalem is the capital of Israel. Trump has done everything even more for Israel than Biden has. So, I do not expect anything different and what I do expect is worsening of the situation under Donald Trump. So, it would be a mistake to think that the policies of the United States are going to change towards the Middle East at all between Biden and Trump.

The truth is that over the past 30-40 years, the Republicans and the Democrats have handed each other policies and they all followed each other specifically about the Middle East. So, I don't think that there will be much of a difference. It would be more violence; it would be more massacres, and more slaughter. The only way this war can end is with international bodies and the resistance of people across the globe to force a cease-fire and stop this genocide. Other than that, I do not have any hope for any sort of governments in the European Union or the United States to make any changes in their behavior.

With several European countries vowing to uphold the International Criminal Court's arrest warrant for Netanyahu and Gallant, do you believe this development could be a turning point in curtailing the Israeli prime minister's aggressive actions?

The fact that the International Criminal Court has issued an arrest war-

rant for Netanyahu and Gallant is an example of success of global resistance against apartheid, against colonialism. The International Criminal Court, as you know, is a very conservative body and if they were actually on the side of the oppressed, they would have immediately [called for the arrest of these killers]. It wouldn't take them a year and a half to call for the arrest of these killers. It would have been immediate. Because they are conservative and [so,] they don't respond to the needs of the population. Typically, financiers here are European rich countries, therefore it has taken them a year and more to say that this genocide has to stop and those who are perpetuating it should be put in jail. This should have been done a year ago.

But the fact that they have actually done this [issuing an arrest warrant] and the fact that the global community is taking this - as such an important step - is very promising.

Throughout the past year and few months when this slaughter has been happening in Gaza, and also in Lebanon, and Syria, Europeans who have been calling themselves champions of legality and democracy have been forced by the public to say we have to observe this; we have to obey the rule of the law, which the ICC is putting forward, which is to arrest these people (Netanyahu and Gallant).

So, I think it's a very significant step, which tells us that mass protest and mass resistance, which has been happening in favor of both Gaza and Lebanon is the only way we can stop these wars and

aggressions; we can stop genocide and apartheid.

The only tool that the global population has is mass resistance, which is in the form of mass protest and things like that which has been happening.

So, I'm very hopeful and I think that it's the sign that we have won. Humanity has won over apartheid, genocide, and colonialism. Humanity has won over torture, rape, and mass murder. We should be very happy. And this will continue. I think we have learned a big lesson.

You've emphasized the importance of mass resistance and global protests against Israel as a crucial means to end the war and genocide. Notably, such protests in the United States across the universities have gained momentum. What's your take on this significant shift in public opinion and its potential impact on the war?

The student protest in the United States is ongoing. It's ongoing on the campus of University of Michigan where I interact with. It's ongoing on the campus of Columbia University and many universities in the United States.

What's more important than this student protest is a massive change of mind among student bodies across the United States.

A few years ago, maybe 3-4 years ago, while Israel was massacring people in Palestine and was doing all kinds of nasty stuff to Palestine, if you talk to [the American] students, they would say, "Oh we're not political. We don't want to talk about".

Israel had a very clean face only a few years ago. Today that mask is off and the students are clearly a 100% against Israel and apartheid, and Zionism. [They are] against colonialism and racism



Police in Riot gear stand guard as demonstrators chant slogans outside the Columbia University campus, on April 18, 2024, in New York, US.
● AP



A displaced child carries filled water bottles at a makeshift tent camp in Deir al-Balah, central Gaza Strip, Aug. 29, 2024.
● AP

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